CLAIMS

1. A method for guiding text-to-speech output timing with speech recognition markers comprising the steps of:

    retrieving tokens in a TTS system, said tokens comprising words, phrase markers, punctuation marks and meta-tags;

    identifying said phrase markers among said retrieved tokens;

    identifying said words among said retrieved tokens;

    TTS playing back said identified words; and,

    pausing said TTS playback in response to said identification of said phrase markers.

2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

    identifying said punctuation marks among said retrieved tokens; and,

    pausing in response to said identification of said punctuation marks.

3. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

    identifying said meta-tags among said retrieved tokens; and,

    pausing in response to said identification of said meta-tags.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein said TTS playing back step comprises the step of TTS playing back said tokens using TTS production rules.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein said pausing step comprises the steps of:

    identifying pause duration data embedded in said phrase marker; and,

    pausing for a period of time corresponding to said pause duration data.

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein said pausing step comprises the

2   step of pausing for a programmatically determined length of time.

1   7.   The method according to claim 1, wherein said pausing step comprises the

2   steps of:

3   retrieving a user playback preference;

4   if said retrieved user playback preference indicates a user preference for

5   realistic playback, pausing for a period of time corresponding to pause duration data

6   stored with said phrase marker; and,

7   if said retrieved user playback preference indicates a user preference for

8   streamlined playback, pausing for a programmatically determined length of time.

1   8.   The method according to claim 2, wherein said step of pausing in response

2   to said identification of a punctuation mark comprises the steps of:

3   classifying said identified punctuation mark into a punctuation class;

4   pausing for a programmatically determined length of time corresponding to

5   said punctuation class.

1   9.   The method according to claim 8, wherein said punctuation class is a class

2   selected from the group consisting of sentence internal markers and sentence final

3   markers.

1   10.   The method according to claim 1, wherein said pausing step comprises the

2   steps of:

3   delaying TTS playback for a period of time corresponding to a programmable

4   upper limit on pause length; and,

5   resuming TTS playback subsequent to said period of time.

11.   A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program

2   having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the

3   machine to perform the steps of:

4   retrieving tokens in a TTS system, said tokens comprising words, phrase

markers, punctuation marks and meta-tags;

       identifying said phrase markers among said retrieved tokens;

7   identifying said words among said retrieved tokens;

8   TTS playing back said identified words; and,

9   pausing said TTS playback in response to said identification of said phrase

10   markers.

1   12.   The machine readable storage according to claim 10, further comprising the

2   steps of:

3   identifying said punctuation marks among said retrieved tokens; and,

4   pausing in response to said identification of said punctuation marks.

1   13.   The machine readable storage according to claim 10, further comprising the

2   steps of:

3   identifying said meta-tags among said retrieved tokens; and,

4   pausing in response to said identification of said meta-tags.

1   14.   The machine readable storage according to claim 11, wherein said TTS

2   playing back step comprises the step of TTS playing back said tokens using TTS

3   production rules.

1   15.   The machine readable storage according to claim 11, wherein said pausing

2   step comprises the steps of:

3   identifying pause duration data embedded in said phrase marker; and,

4   pausing for a period of time corresponding to said pause duration data.

5   16.   The machine readable storage according to claim 11, wherein said pausing

6   step comprises the step of pausing for a programmatically determined length of

7   time.

1   17.   The machine readable storage according to claim 11, wherein said pausing

2   step comprises the steps of:

3   retrieving a user playback preference;

4   if said retrieved user playback preference indicates a user preference for

5   realistic playback, pausing for a period of time corresponding to pause duration data

6   stored with said phrase marker; and,

7   if said retrieved user playback preference indicates a user preference for

8   streamlined playback, pausing for a programmatically determined length of time.

1   18.   The machine readable storage according to claim 12, wherein said step of

2   pausing in response to said identification of a punctuation mark comprises the steps

3   of:

4   classifying said identified punctuation mark into a punctuation class;

5   pausing for a programmatically determined length of time corresponding to

6   said punctuation class.

1   19.   The machine readable storage according to claim 18, wherein said

2   punctuation class is a class selected from the group consisting of sentence internal

3   markers and sentence final markers.

1   20.   The machine readable storage according to claim 11, wherein said pausing

2   step comprises the steps of:

3   delaying TTS playback for a period of time corresponding to a programmable

4   upper limit on pause length; and,

5   resuming TTS playback subsequent to said period of time.